

Basic Journal List for Small Hospital Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This Basic Journal List of forty-eight journal titles is intended as a selection guide for the librarian of the small hospital. It is based on a survey of physicians in Virginia who were asked to review journal titles contained in the 1967 edition of a list compiled by Mr. Alfred N. Brandon. The List is designed for the library in a hospital of from 100 to 300 beds and for the active clinician.

INTRODUCTION

THE following "Basic Journal List" was prepared as a selection guide for small medical libraries. A listing of titles which was compiled by Mr. Alfred N. Brandon, Director of the Welch Medical Library, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, was used as the starting point for a survey (1). It was felt that the 140 titles on the Brandon list were too numerous for the typical small hospital library. Copies of the list—with the addition of one title—were mailed to a selected group of physicians in Virginia. They were asked to review the titles with a view to compiling an inventory of journal titles which would be an essential component of a small hospital library. The results of the survey form the basis for the suggested list given below.

The suggested journal list is based on twenty-three returns as well as on personal interviews with several physicians. The twenty-three doctors who returned the amended Brandon list recommended a total of 922 titles, or an average of forty titles for the small hospital library. They also recommended thirty-three journal titles *not* included in the questionnaire. After careful consideration of the needs of the personnel of a small hospital, and the responses to the amended Brandon list, a basic listing of *forty-eight* titles is recommended. This "Basic Journal List for the Small Hospital Library" includes eight titles which did not appear on the Brandon list.

THE BRANDON LIST

Before analyzing the returns, it may be of interest to review briefly the questionnaire itself. In its revised form the list contained 141 titles. These titles included 121 medical titles in the strict sense of the word. The remainder were five journal titles in the field of nursing, five in the field of hospital administration, one in dentistry, one in medical education, one in library administration, and two in the history of medicine. In addition, there were five indexes to medical or nursing literature.

Most respondents limited their comments to journal titles on the list which they felt should be in a small hospital library; six suggested additional titles.

Several of the respondents pointed out that they were not completely at home with all of the titles which they had to judge, especially with those pertaining to some of the specialties and subspecialties.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The physicians to whom the questionnaire was sent were selected exclusively on the basis of their interest in medical library affairs and in medical education. Most of them were members of hospital library committees or directors of medical education. Included in the sample were physicians engaged in the fields of internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, radiology, gynecology and obstetrics, otolaryngology, military medicine, and general practice. Many were affiliated with small hospitals, including one who was affiliated with a hospital with less than 100 beds, and eleven physicians who were affiliated with hospitals with 250 or less beds. Only a minority of the respondents were on the staff of large hospitals, such as the two University Center Hospitals in Virginia or the Naval Hospital at Portsmouth, Virginia. By including specialists in various fields from smaller

as well as larger towns, it was hoped to obtain views from a broad cross section of physicians.

DEFINITION OF THE SMALL HOSPITAL

Comments were received on the question as to what represented a small hospital within the context of the survey. On the basis of these responses, it may be concluded that a "small hospital" would be one with *over 100 beds but not more than 300 to 350 beds*. A hospital exceeding 350 beds, it was said, should have at least all of the 141 titles in the questionnaire. Dr. Raymond Maret, Medical Director of Maryview Hospital in Portsmouth, Virginia, wrote as follows:

I believe, in the light of my experience with less than 100-bed station hospitals during my Army service, that I wouldn't purchase any journals at all for that size hospital. Instead, I would buy Audio-Digest in the broad specialty series.

Another comment by Dr. Joseph D. Lea, Medical Director of DePaul Hospital at Norfolk, said, "The journals checked with an X are those which we think should be in the hospital library of an institution of 300 beds."

On the basis of these and other remarks, it was concluded that the "Basic Journal List for the Small Hospital Library", presented here, would be suitable for a hospital library in an institution with over 100 but not less than 300 to 350 beds.

FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE NATURE OF THE COLLECTION

Other comments stressed special features and services offered by hospitals. It was felt, for example, that holdings of nursing periodicals might not be necessary in a hospital not having a school of nursing. On the other hand, a hospital with a physical therapist or an oral surgeon on the staff, it was said, might require journals in these disciplines.

A typical observation along these lines was made by Dr. Frank W. Gearing, Jr., Chairman of the Library Committee and Radiologist at the Rockingham Memorial Hospital in Harrisonburg, who said:

I think the material available in the Library would depend a great deal on the interests and activities of the medical staff. . . . In our institution we have an oral surgeon, for example, and hence I think the *Journal of Oral Surgery* should be in-

cluded in our Library. We do not have a neurosurgeon nor a plastic surgeon, so that we have not included these in our list of journals.

Another statement, by Dr. M. Pinson Neal, Jr., Assistant Dean at the Medical College of Virginia, read, "Obviously, the makeup of the medical staff, and the location of the hospital would alter this list [of journals for the small hospital library] in addition to the obvious personal prejudices."

Regardless of these reservations, there existed a strong feeling that a library should be maintained in a community hospital. The opinion was best expressed by Dr. Claiborne W. Fitchett, President of the Medical Staff of the Norfolk General Hospital, who wrote:

Certainly the community hospital today is the center of the practice of medicine for each community. An adequately staffed and equipped medical library in such a unit would certainly serve to elevate the practice of medicine in that particular area.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

As was stated previously, the amended Brandon list containing 141 journal titles was sent to physicians for their comments and opinions. The responses varied greatly with regard to the number of journal titles which the physicians believed should be in a small hospital library. Five of the twenty-three respondents felt that less than twenty journal titles would be sufficient. The lowest number of titles recommended was thirteen. On the other end of the scale there were three physicians who spoke in favor of a collection of over seventy titles. The total number of journal titles recommended by twenty-three physicians was 955, or an average of forty-two titles. These divergencies of views indicate basic disagreements as to the size of a journal collection in the small hospital library.

On the other hand, there existed general support for a definite number of journal titles. The Basic List presented below is based largely on the results of the survey.

JOURNALS TO BE EXCLUDED FROM A BASIC LIST

Before giving the data for the Basic List, it may be of interest to review the journal titles which received no or only very limited support. *Eight journals did not receive a single vote.*

JOURNAL LIST FOR SMALL HOSPITAL LIBRARIES

They were:

International Surgery
Journal of Biological Chemistry
Journal of Gerontology
Journal of Investigative Dermatology
Journal of Laryngology and Otology
Metabolism: Clinical and Experimental
Neurology
Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology

Another group of seventy-one titles received less than 25 percent support, or anywhere from one to five votes. These journals are listed below in alphabetical order with the number of votes added in parentheses:

Acta Medica Scandinavica (4)
American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (2)
American Journal of Epidemiology (2)
American Journal of Ophthalmology (3)
American Journal of Physical Medicine (1)
American Journal of Physiology (3)
American Journal of Psychiatry (3)
American Journal of Public Health and the Nation's Health (3)
American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (3)
Anesthesia and Analgesia; Current Researches (1)
Angiology (1)
Annals of Allergy (2)
Annals of Otology, Rhinology and Laryngology (5)
Annals of Physical Medicine (2)
Archives of Environmental Health (3)
Archives of Ophthalmology (5)
Archives of Otolaryngology (3)
Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (1)
Brain (2)
British Heart Journal (3)
British Journal of Surgery (4)
Bulletin of the History of Medicine (1)
Bulletin of the Medical Library Association (2)
Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine (1)
Canadian Medical Association Journal (2)
Cancer Research (1)
Circulation Research (1)
Cumulative Index to Nursing Literature (2)
Current Problems in Surgery (3)
Diabetes (4)

Diseases of the Colon and Rectum (3)
Endocrinology (4)
Fertility and Sterility (1)
Hospital Literature Index (1)
Hospital Management (3)
Hospital Progress (1)
Hospitals (5)
Industrial Medicine and Surgery (2)
International Nursing Index (2)
Investigative Urology (2)
Johns Hopkins Medical Journal (4)
Journal of Allergy (5)
Journal of the American Dental Association (5)
Journal of the American Dietetic Association (3)
Journal of the American Geriatrics Society (3)
Journal of Bacteriology (4)
Journal of the History of Medicine (1)
Journal of Immunology (2)
Journal of Medical Education (3)
Journal of the National Cancer Institute (5)
Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease (3)
Journal of Neurosurgery (3)
Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the British Commonwealth (3)
Journal of Oral Surgery (3)
Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (2)
Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery (5)
Laboratory Investigation (1)
Modern Hospital (1)
National Library of Medicine Current Catalog (3)
Nursing Clinics of North America (5)
Nursing Forum (1)
Nursing Outlook (2)
Nursing Research (1)
Nutrition Reviews (2)
Pharmacological Reviews (1)
Physical Therapy (3)
Physiological Reviews (1)
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (2)
Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases (3)
Public Health Reports (1)
Unlisted Drugs (1)

Journal titles receiving five or less votes were excluded from consideration for a Basic List of primarily clinically oriented journal titles for the small hospital. This left sixty-two titles (out

of 141) from which the final selection was made, plus any additional titles *not* mentioned on the Brandon list.

A BASIC JOURNAL LIST FOR THE SMALL
HOSPITAL LIBRARY

The following is the suggested list of journal titles for the small hospital library. In order to provide a better overview, the titles will be arranged according to broad subject areas. As before, the number of votes will be given in parentheses following the titles. Journal titles with an asterisk were not on the original Brandon list. They are yearbooks, an annual review, the annual *Current Therapy*, and one other journal title which were selected by the compiler with the advice of a number of physicians who reviewed the list.

Internal Medicine

- American Heart Journal (15)
- American Journal of Cardiology (13)
- American Journal of Medicine (15)
- American Review of Respiratory Disease (6)
- Annals of Internal Medicine (21)
- Annual Review of Medicine*
- Archives of Internal Medicine (19)
- Cancer (17)
- Circulation (12)
- Current Therapy*
- GP (12)
- Gastroenterology (12)
- Journal of the American Medical Association (20)
- Lancet (13)
- Medical Clinics of North America (17)
- Medicine (9)
- New England Journal of Medicine (23)
- Quarterly Journal of Medicine*
- Science (7)
- Year Book of Cardiovascular and Renal Diseases*
- Year Book of Medicine*

Pediatrics

- American Journal of Diseases of Children (20)
- Archives of Disease in Childhood (11)
- Journal of Pediatrics (12)
- Pediatric Clinics of North America (15)
- Pediatrics (14)
- Year Book of Pediatrics*

Surgery

- American Journal of Surgery (18)
- Annals of Surgery (17)
- Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery (13)
- Surgery, Gynecology and Obstetrics (19)
- Surgical Clinics of North America (16)
- Year Book of General Surgery*

Anesthesiology

- Anesthesiology (9)

Dermatology

- Archives of Dermatology (11)

Gynecology and Obstetrics

- American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (17)

Neurology and Psychiatry

- Archives of General Psychiatry (7)
- Archives of Neurology (11)

Nursing

- American Journal of Nursing (12)

Pathology and Clinical Pathology

- American Journal of Clinical Pathology (13)
- American Journal of Pathology (11)
- Year Book of Pathology and Clinical Pathology*

Pharmacology and Therapeutics

- Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (8)
- Medical Letter on Drugs and Therapeutics (13)

Radiology

- American Journal of Roentgenology, Radium Therapy and Nuclear Medicine (11)
- Radiology (12)

Urology

- Journal of Urology (15)

Indexes

- Index Medicus (19)

POSSIBLE SUPPLEMENTARY TITLES

The following are twenty-two journal titles which received *more than five votes* and which might be considered as supplementary titles. As in previous tabulations, the number of votes received is supplied in parentheses.

Internal Medicine

- American Journal of Digestive Diseases (8)
- American Journal of the Medical Sciences (9)
- Arthritis and Rheumatism (7)

JOURNAL LIST FOR SMALL HOSPITAL LIBRARIES

Blood (10)
British Medical Journal (8)
DM: Disease-a-Month (9)
Diseases of the Chest (7)
Geriatrics (6)
Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism (10)
Journal of Clinical Investigation (9)
Journal of Infectious Diseases (7)
Journal of Laboratory and Clinical Medicine (9)
Mayo Clinic Proceedings (10)
Postgraduate Medicine (11)
Surgery
Archives of Surgery (13)
Surgery (12)
Gynecology and Obstetrics
Obstetrics and Gynecology (13)
Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology (6)
Pathology and Clinical Pathology
Archives of Pathology (6)
Journal of Clinical Pathology (7)
Radiology
Radiologic Clinics of North America (7)
Hospital Administration
Hospital Administration (6)

CONCLUSIONS

A "Basic Journal List for Small Hospital Libraries" was compiled following a survey of physicians from small as well as larger Virginia hospitals who were selected on the basis of their knowledge of the medical literature. The goal was to select a journal collection which would be most useful to the active clinician in the primary fields of internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, radiology, pathology, and a few other major disciplines.

The survey was conducted through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire contained the 140 titles in the "Selected List of Books and Journals for the Small Medical Library" which had been compiled by Mr. Alfred Brandon. One other journal title was added to this list. As was suspected, a large percentage of these titles was not found suitable. The responses indicated that about forty titles would suffice for a small hospital library.

The Basic Journal List comprises forty-eight journal titles. They include forty titles which appeared originally on Mr. Brandon's list and

eight others which were felt to be of sufficient value to be considered. The forty-eight journal titles fall into the following broad subject areas: Internal Medicine (21), Pediatrics (6), Surgery (6), Anesthesiology (1), Dermatology (1), Gynecology and Obstetrics (1), Neurology and Psychiatry (2), Nursing (1), Pathology and Clinical Pathology (3), Pharmacology and Therapeutics (2), Radiology (2), Urology (1), Indexes (1). Most of them received a substantial backing from the twenty-three physicians who returned the questionnaires and from others whose opinions were obtained in interviews.

Another twenty-two titles from the Brandon list were recorded as possible supplementary titles. They received anywhere from six to thirteen votes in the mail survey, and might be considered in cases where a forty-eight title listing was felt to be inadequate.

The "small hospital" for which the Basic Journal Title List was prepared is one with more than 100 beds, but not more than 300 to 350 beds. Hospitals with less than 100 beds were felt to be too small for a regular journal collection, and hospitals with more than 350 beds would probably need larger holdings.

It is obvious that any compilation of this type must be regarded as a "basic" list in its true sense. Physicians will probably never quite agree on the definitive size of the journal collection for their hospital libraries, nor on the journals and indexes to be included. House organs and publications sponsored by drug houses, for example, which many physicians find useful have not been included because it was the intention of the compiler to recommend only the very best scientific literature.

One other question which may be raised concerns the problem of binding and preservation. It is the compiler's conviction that the journals on the Basic Journal List should be bound and preserved for future use for as long as there is space in the hospital library. An unbound collection will soon disintegrate and lose its value. This policy need not be applied to the year-books, however, which may be discarded after five years.

REFERENCE

1. BRANDON, ALFRED N. Selected list of books and journals for the small medical library. *Bull. Med. Libr. Ass.* 55: 141-159, Apr. 1967.